

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR SHEILA KUEHL

December 18, 2018

Prohibition of Price Gouging

The Woolsey Fire was a severely destructive wildfire that ignited on November 8, 2018 and ravaged the areas of Calabasas, Hidden Hills, Malibu, Agoura Hills, Westlake Village and the County of Los Angeles (County). This devastating fire spread rapidly and was fueled in part by drought conditions caused by shifting climate conditions. The Woolsey Fire burned over 96,000 acres and caused the loss of three lives and many properties, as well as wide spread evacuations of over 250,000 residents. The residents of Los Angeles County continue to suffer due to the devastation caused by the fire and continue to need scarce goods, services, and housing.

On November 13, 2018, as a result of these disastrous conditions and extreme peril to the safety of Los Angeles County residents and property, the Chair of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board) proclaimed the existence of a local emergency pursuant to the authority provided under Chapter 2.68 of the Los Angeles County Code (County Code). This proclamation remains in effect until its termination by the Board.

MOTION

Solis	_____
Ridley-Thomas	_____
Kuehl	_____
Barger	_____
Hahn	_____

Upon the declaration of a local emergency resulting from the fire, Chapter 8.09 of the County Code prohibits increasing the price of various goods and services, hotel and motel rates, and construction goods and services, more than 10% above the price charged immediately before the declaration of emergency. This prohibition applies to goods, services, hotel and motel rates for thirty (30) days after a declaration of emergency, and to construction goods and services for one-hundred eighty (180) days after the declaration. The Board may extend these protections for additional thirty (30) day periods if deemed necessary to protect the lives, property or welfare of the citizens.

Due to the widespread destruction resulting from the Woolsey Fire, there is a heightened risk to consumers of excessively increased prices for goods, services, and housing that are vital and necessary for their health, safety, and welfare. The County has received complaints of price gouging and continues to investigate potential violations. Therefore, the County has a continued interest in ensuring that County residents are protected against overpricing of vital and necessary goods, services, and housing during a state of emergency as proclaimed by the President of the United States or the Governor of California, or during a local emergency as declared pursuant to law.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors declare that the protections under Chapter 8.09 of the County Code prohibiting price gouging in time of emergency, are extended and will continue in thirty (30) day periods so long as the Proclamation of Existence of a Local Emergency by the Board remains in effect.